

Saudi Arabia's Dollars Have Killed Thousands of Afghans Since the Soviet-Afghan War

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Global Research, April 04, 2017

Region: [Middle East & North Africa](#)

Theme: [Military and WMD](#), [Terrorism](#),
[US NATO War Agenda](#)

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Saudi Arabia has funneled ample funds to the wars before and after the U.S. invasion of Afghanistan in 2001. This country remained to be a major instigator of the ongoing conflict in Afghanistan rather by rolling in millions of dollars.

In the wake of occupation of Afghanistan by U.S. and NATO, many world countries sprang into assisting the war-plagued nation somehow, whether in reconstruction area or military, but Saudi Arabia unlike before 2001 when it stepped in to support Jihadists and later Taliban who ruled the country in an oppressive manner, abruptly disappeared from the ground and has ever since not taken an apparently humanitarian or friendly turn to Afghanistan.

Saudi Arabia and Pakistan along with United Arab Emirates were only states that recognized the repressive regime of the Taliban who operated strikingly against human rights.

Saudi Arabia largely financed Mujahideen's so-called sacred war against Soviet forces in 1980s and thereafter still continued to pour in funds for a ruthless Mujahideen armed infighting in Kabul that claimed 65,000 lives and forced millions to flee to neighboring or Western countries. All this financial aid to Mujahideen and later under U.S. occupation to terrorists [Taliban...] was and is still channeled via Pakistan, a dearest to Washington and Riyadh.

Former director of Pakistani ISI's Afghan bureau Brigadier Mohammad Yousaf says,

"If one dollar comes from the U.S., the other is received from Saudi Arabia".

This assortment of funds amounting to hundreds of millions of dollars a year in 1980s was transferred by CIA to special ISI-owned accounts in Pakistan. According to brigadier Yousuf's accounts, the money provided by Saudi Arabia was quite a lot than that of CIA's. Saudi princes and Sheikhs, apart from the mainstream funds, would generously offer hefty cashes to various ideal and intimate Jihadists.



All this cash flow was, in hyped words, meant for a “holy Jihad” against alleged Soviet occupation, a war fed by battle cry of beating the “infidels”, even as it was in no apparent reason for Saudi’s Islamic duty or as compassion for Afghan Mujahideens. But we also have to admit that Saudi Arabia has not been in a position to extract enormous profits from wars in Afghanistan or the Middle East and its funding is just part of alliance with the West. Saudi Arabia is well involved in the West’s war games, and denial of its order or a minor retreat in a process could lead to a backfire.

In 2003, Saudi Arabia [rejected to support the U.S.](#) and its allies in the invasion of Iraq. In the aftermath, terrorist activity within Saudi Arabia increased dramatically in 2003, with the Riyadh compound bombing and other attacks.

It has to be noted that some Saudi princes dislike the U.S. and NATO presence in Afghanistan, because Saudi Arabia as well as Pakistan as recognizers of the Taliban and Mujahideens had sought broad stakes in Afghanistan before the U.S. occupation and didn’t imagine a collapse of the Taliban regime.

Even so, Al-Qaeda and the Taliban are products of Saudi Arabia. The intelligence agency of Saudi Arabia hired and sent Osama Bin Laden as mercenary to Pakistan at the behest of the CIA and Pakistan’s ISI. This is substantiated with Osama’s own remarks, as saying:

“I was appointed by Saudis as representative in Afghanistan to fight (infidel) Russians. I was placed in Pakistan’s border regions with Afghanistan and welcomed volunteers arriving from Saudi Arabia and other countries. I set up my first training camp close to sites where Pakistani officers were training volunteers. Arms were provided by the U.S. and funds by Saudi Arabia”.

Former late prime minister of Pakistan Benazir Bhutto once opened up and said:

“No one could just blame Pakistan for the [Afghan war] because the formation of the Taliban was a concerted plan which was masterminded by the U.S. and funded by Saudi Arabia and Pakistan put it into effect”.



Former finance minister of the Taliban regime Agha Jan Motasim [in a talk with the New York Times](#) remarked how he traveled to Saudi Arabia under the guise of pilgrimage to get financial support from Saudis and others.

He explains how he disguised as a doctor and fled across the border into Pakistan in a Red Crescent ambulance amid fierce U.S. air campaign in 2001 when the Taliban regime fell. He banded together with the other fellow Taliban leaders in Quetta city of Pakistan and later became head of the finance committee of the Taliban movement that still claims tens of lives every day in Afghanistan.

He flew to Saudi Arabia in his first trips. This country was a good rallying point for many other major donors pretending to visit there for pilgrimage. This Taliban leader visited Saudi Arabia two to three times each year from 2002 to 2007. But when asked, Saudis excuse their failure by describing it unlikely to screen and distinguish terrorists from normal pilgrims each year in massive influx.

Saudis supply money to Taliban at a time an Afghan tribal elder and member of High Peace Council of Afghanistan Rohullah Wakeel said that we asked Saudi officials to fund and support the peace efforts of this council, but they [Saudis] indicated no interest. He commented:

“They are deaf, we asked them for help, we just asked for “dates”, but they gave us nothing”.

A former United States Secretary of State Advisor, Vali Nasr had said that Taliban were allowed in Saudi Arabia to extort millions of dollars from hundreds of thousands of Pashtun labors. Taliban would impose “taxes” on these labors and would bully their families in Afghanistan to death if they failed to pay. He asserted:

“No doubt, it was unlikely without green light from the government of Saudi Arabia”.

Afghan officials have revealed that once this money was raised, it was siphoned into Taliban’s hands using unusual channels including local banks in tribal regions of Pakistan and informal money transfers.

Moreover, ex Afghan Intelligence Chief Rahmatullah Nabeel said that last year they discovered families of Al-Qaeda members entering into eastern Afghanistan with a stash of “gold bars”.

While on the contrary, Prince Turki Al-Faisal who led Saudi intelligence agency for 24 years ruled out any allegation that Saudi Arabia has supported Taliban, as saying:

“A single penny has not been given to the Taliban during my tenure as intelligence chief”.

In most recent months, Taliban and other militant groups have embattled a staggering number of 40,000 fighters in almost eight provinces across Afghanistan, the mobilization which, in Afghan official's accounts, is propelled by an inflow of US\$ 1 billion by external elements.

At the same time, Saudi Arabia is offering substantial development and defense agreements to Ashraf Ghani's government which is widely viewed as pretexts by Saudi Sheikhs and other Gulf region states to beef up certain target organizations, seminaries and universities in Afghanistan in a not-so-subtle attempt to promote Wahhabism and catch up with Iran that has planted the seeds years ago.



At the state level development, Afghan president Ashraf Ghani earlier voiced support of Saudi Arabia's military campaign in Yemen in his second visit of King Salman which met with extreme backlash inside Afghanistan. In return for this handshake, Ashraf Ghani urged Saudi rulers to block the stream of funds into Taliban's hand from affluent Sheikhs and get them [Taliban] to negotiation table.

Saudi Arabia's only important objective in Afghanistan is to subdue Iranian influence which is already in full swing in the Middle East. This Saudi-Iran row and rivalry is largely for hegemony over Islamic world where the two stands in relative firm position. An Iranian diplomat on the condition of anonymity told BBC that latest interventions of Saudi Arabia in Afghanistan may cost as heavy as leading to confrontation with Iran.

As the latest upswing in Saudi-Afghan relationship, Saudi Arabia is reported to build one of the largest Islamic Universities worth of US\$ 500 million in south-eastern Nangarhar province of Afghanistan, after Afghan Chief Executive Abdullah was received by King Salman in a heated welcoming ceremony.

The University area is quite close to the Islamic State's (ISIS) hotspot in districts bordered

with Pakistan. Earlier, a BBC team took risk to trek through terrifying deserts to get to the University construction area. It found that it is just a district or two away from the Islamic State; this is while Saudi Arabia could simply afford to lay the cornerstone at a safe place.

The Saudi Arabia's picking of this province is not at random, it has a well overview and idea of the favorability of the area for promotion of what it seeks around the Sunni-dominant regions. It seemingly has no fear of the Islamic State in proximity, nor may the terrorist group throw any gauntlet at it.

What pushed Saudi Arabia to invest in large-scale were recent extremist movements at the provincial university of Nangarhar. Last year, the University's students staged a stark protest against the Kabul regime with clear banners of the IS and chanted slogans in favor of extremism. Experts believe Saudi Arabia seeks to underpin the Islamic State's strongholds in Afghanistan by the new Islamic University.

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